

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 SCCT-02 SAB-01 SAM-01 NIC-01 ACDA-19

IO-14 EUR-25 CCO-00 SSO-00 /156 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 178619

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR XF

SUBJECT: IRANIAN CONCERN OVER SITUATION ON ISRAELI-SYRIAN BORDER

1. IRANIAN MINISTER COUNSELOR MAJD CALLED ON DEPUTY ASST SECY SOBER AUGUST 14 TO REQUEST US ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SITUATION ALONG ISRAELI-SYRIAN BORDER. HE SAID GOI HAD RECEIVED INFO INDICATING RENEWED FIGHTING MIGHT BE IMMINENT.

2. SOBER COMMENTED THAT THERE HAS BEEN MUCH PRESS SPECULATION RECENTLY ON POSSIBILITY OF RENEWED HOSTILITIES ON ISRAELI-SYRIAN FRONT. USG HAS BEEN WATCHING SITUATION WITH GREAT CARE. ISRAELIS ARE STATING THAT THERE HAS BEEN MAJOR BUILD-UP OF SOVIET-SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT IN SYRIA AND SYRIANS HAVE CLAIMED THAT ISRAEL IS PREPARING FOR WAR. SINCE ENDING OF OCTOBER WAR, SOBER CONTINUED, SOVIETS HAVE REFURBISHED SYRIAN FORCES AND IN SOME RESPECTS SYRIA IS STRONGER THAN AT BEGINNING OF OCTOBER WAR, BUT IN OTHER

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RESPECTS IS WEAKER. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT RENEWED WAR

IS IMMINENT BUT SITUATION MUST BE WATCHED CAREFULLY. WE DO NOT PRETEND WE KNOW EVERYTHING THAT IS HAPPENING AND, OF COURSE, SITUATION IS VOLATILE.

3. SOBER EMPHASIZED THAT CONTINUED PROGRESS TOWARD EVENTUAL PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IS ESSENTIAL TO MINIMIZE RISK

OF RENEWED FIGHTING. THIS MONTH US HAS HELD EXTENDED EXCHANGES OF VIEWS WITH DEP PRIMIN ALLON OF ISRAEL AND PRIMIN RIFAI OF JORDAN, AND EGYPTIAN FONMIN FAHMY IS CURRENTLY IN TOWN; KING HUSSEIN WILL BE HERE LATER THIS WEEK, AND SYRIAN FONMIN KHADDAM IS DUE TO ARRIVE NEXT WEEK.

4. US HAS BEEN ENCOURAGED BY WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED SINCE OCTOBER WAR AND TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE DIS-ENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL HAS BEEN WORKING REASONABLY WELL. WE RECOGNIZE THAT STEPS ALREADY TAKEN TOWARD PEACE ARE ONLY THE BEGINNING. IN OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH ABOVE ME LEADERS WE HAVE BEEN ENERGETICALLY SEARCHING FOR CONSENSUS ON WHAT NEXT STEP SHOULD BE.

5. MAJD EXPRESSED APPRECIATION AND IRAN'S CONTINUING INTEREST IN EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE MIDDLE EAST PEACE. SOBER RESPONDED THAT WE VERY MUCH VALUED IRAN'S SUPPORT AND WISE COUNSEL RECEIVED FROM SHAH ON THIS MATTER, AND AGREED THAT WE SHOULD STAY IN TOUCH ON THIS SUBJECT. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT ALL FRIENDS OF PEACE IN THE REGION WILL EXERCISE APPROPRIATE OCCASIONS TO ENCOURAGE RESTRAINT AND REASON ON THE PARTIES TO THE DISPUTE. KISSINGER

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